

Sentinel

Woodbridge

Military shells found at building site near arsenal

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EDISON — Work on a housing development was halted last week after construction crews unearthed 270 military shells near the former Raritan Arsenal.

Construction workers, some employees from Middlesex County College who worked in a nearby maintenance building, and federal Environmental Protection Agency workers in trailers were evacuated, Lt. Matthew Freeman said.

The shells were discovered about 1 p.m. Sept. 26 while the crews were working on the Beachwood at Edison development, he said.

“After the construction crew realized what they found, they notified Edison police,” Freeman said. “Police and Edison Fire Department personnel and officials from emergency management responded to the scene. They unearthed 270 shells, adjacent to Middlesex County College.”

Lennar Corp., based in Freehold, is developer set to build 87 town houses, 198 apartments and more than 61,000 square feet of retail space.

After the site was secured, members of Fort Monmouth’s explosive ordnance disposal unit responded to the scene, about a quarter mile off Woodbridge Avenue.

“The explosive ordnance disposal unit found that none of the shells were alive,” said Lt. Freeman. “The construction work was ordered to be discontinued at the portion of the property where shells were found. Construction workers are permitted to resume work on other areas of the property.”

The unit was on the scene until roughly 8:30 p.m. and removed the shells, he said.

Middlesex County College and the Environmental Protection Agency property were formerly the Raritan Arsenal, Military Weapons Depot, used through the First and Second World Wars. The munitions production area closed in the early 1960s.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will conduct a more in-depth inspection this week, Freeman said.

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